

DEFENCE

OF SOME PASSAGES in the
HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE

Trinitarian Controversy,

Against the EXCEPTIONS made in

TWO PAMPHLETS,

The One intituled,

A True NARRATIVE of the Controversy
concerning the Doctrine of the TRINITY,
being a Reply, &c.

The Other intituled,

AN INQUIRY into the Miracle said to have
been ~~done~~ in the Fifth Century upon
some Heretick Christians, in Confirmation
of the Doctrine of the TRINITY, &c.

By WILLIAM BERRIMAN, D. D.
Rector of St. Andrew's Undershaft, and
Fellow of Eton College.

L O N D O N:

Printed for Messrs. WARD and WICKSTEED, in the
Inner-Temple-Lane. M, DCC, XXXI.

DEFENCE

OF THE

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE

Trinitarian Controversy

Against the EXCEPTIONS made in

TWO PAMPHLETS

THE ONE intitled

A True Narrative of the Controversy
concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity
being a Reply, &c.

THE OTHER intitled

An Inquiry into the Miracle said to have
been wrought in the Fifth Century upon
the Person of Christ in the Trinitarian
Controversy

By WILLIAM HARTWELL D.D.
Fellow of Eton College

LONDON:

Printed by W. and J. Widdows, in the
 Strand, near the Royal Exchange

Advertisement.

THE first of the Pamphlets here consider'd was publish'd about half a year after the *Historical Account*; at which time I began to throw my thoughts upon it into writing, till understanding it to be a book but little read or regarded, I thought it not worth while to trouble the world with any distinct answer at that time, but chose to lay my papers aside, till some other occasion should draw me out again into the same controversy. About half a year ago, appear'd the other Pamphlet, which relating only to a single fact, I easily foresaw, the answer to it would fall in so short a compass, as might leave room for me to say what I saw fit in answer to the other. With this view the following papers were drawn into form some months since; but by reason chiefly of my absence from town, I have judg'd it proper to defer the publication till now.

Nov. 6. 1730.

Will. Berriman.

Advertisement.

THE first of the Pamphlets here
considered was published about
half a year after the *Review*
appeared; at which time I began to
show my thoughts upon it in a writ-
ing, till understanding it to be a book
not little read or regarded, I thought
it not worth while to trouble the world
with any dissenting answer at that time,
but chose to lay my papers aside, till
some other occasion should draw me
out again into the same controversy.
About half a year ago, appeared the
other Pamphlet, which relating only
to a single fact, I easily forgave, the
answer to it would fall in to show a
comparison, as might leave room for me
to say what I saw fit in answer to the
other. With this view the following
papers were drawn into form some
months since; but by reason chiefly
of my absence from town, I have
not been it proper to deliver the publica-
tion till now.

Wm. Bayman

DEFENCE

SOME PASSAGES

IN THE

Historical Account of the Trinitarian CONTROVERSY, &c.

PART I.

WHEN I undertook to state the *Controversies that have been in the Church, concerning the Doctrine of the Holy and Ever-blessed Trinity*, and that within the compass of eight sermons, deliver'd before a publick audience, I could not imagine it should be expected from me to descend to every minute and incidental circumstance, but hoped to be allowed the usual liberty of those who write epitomes, to note down the principal points upon which the controversy turn'd, and refer the more inquisitive Reader to the original Authors for his fuller satisfaction; to whom I have made such frequent references as can leave him little at a loss in that particular. And yet from hence I am charged, by a late anonymous Writer, with partiality and

and misrepresentation, with stifling and misreporting of evidence, and what not? But amidst all this noise and outcry, it gives me a very sensible satisfaction to observe, that he is forced either to catch at shadows, or else to lay stress upon such interpretations as have been confuted over and over by much abler hands.

That an Historian ought to be impartial is very certain, and so far to be indifferent towards all parties, as not to deal unjustly in representing them. But I could never understand, that he is not allowed to make his own reflections on the facts which he relates, and declare his judgment concerning them; I could never understand, that he is bound to speak with the same respect of Traitors and Rebels, as of lawful Princes and their faithful Adherents. If our censorious Critick will undertake to justify these rules of history, he must at the same time allow that there never was such a thing as an impartial history, no, not in the Bible itself.

No more could I imagine, when I undertook the part of an Historian, that I should be obliged to enter into all the critical disputes about the use of certain phrases in the early ages, any otherwise than as the course and nature of the history should make it necessary. They do properly belong to another branch of the Controversy, and have already been so fully discussed by Dr. *Waterland*, in his writings against this anonymous Gentleman, that as it had been a matter of too much length to fall within my compass, so it had certainly exposed me to the blame of an useless repetition of the same things which had been much better urged and stated by another hand. For which reason all that this Gentleman has been pleased to urge against me in proof of the *Father's Supremacy*, and the *Subjection of the Son*, and his distinction between
primary

primary and secondary worship, together with the references to his former writings upon those points, will be best answer'd by referring him to such passages in *Dr. Waterland*, where his notion is already most fully and solidly confuted.

II. It would be highly affronting to suspect that this acute Author, who requires such an exact and critical account of every particular, should himself undertake to write *a true narrative of the controversy*, without punctually representing every fact on which it turn'd, and those especially which were ready pointed out to him by that *historical account* which he pretends to confute. And yet what has he added to the particulars abovementioned, besides a confused attempt to settle and unsettle the meaning of the word *ομοῖος*,— an unfair representation of the *Council of Antioch* against *Paul of Samosata*— a shameless denial of a plain fact, *viz.* that the Hereticks of the first ages objected to the Catholicks, that they *divided the substance*— a false state of the question debated between *Alexander* and *Arius*, the interposition of *Constantine*, and the *Council of Nice*,— and an unreasonable triumph in the decisions of some *Arian* or *Semi-Arian* Councils in the following reign?

Had his accounts been right in every particular, yet could this deserve to be entitled *a true narrative of the controversy*? Must his Adversary be blamed for omitting a few circumstances which have but a slender relation to the main import of some facts? And can he justify himself in the entire omission of a great number of material and important facts, most necessary to be known for the stating of this controversy in a clear light? If I had falsely reported or misrepresented them, it was his business to detect the fallacy, as he has vainly endeavour'd to do in those few instances already

ready mention'd. But if I have reported justly, then the main of the history (and consequently the received doctrine) will stand, whatever shall become of the dispute between us in those few instances.

But sure this considerate Author had some weighty reason for an omission so obvious to every Reader. I could assign a good one for him, but he'll never own it; and therefore I would chuse very briefly to examine that which he has given for himself. It amounts in short to this, That all the other facts I have produced are nothing to the purpose, proving only before the Council of *Nice*, that the Son of God is a Divine Person, and truly God, in opposition to such as held him to be a mere man, (without being able to alledge so much as one passage teaching him to be God Supreme) and after the Council, pursuing and discussing from the fifth to the present century the various factions, divisions, and mutual persecutions of the Athanasians and Arians, so call'd, as either were encouraged and assisted by the temporal powers.

It seems it looks more for the credit of his cause to say something than to say nothing. Some Readers may look into his book only, and others who look into both, may not be able to decide between us.

III. But give me leave to recapitulate a little. Was it nothing to the purpose to observe that the manner in which the ancient fathers opposed the heresies of their times, evinces their opinion of the Godhead to be such as could not possibly consist with the fundamental principles of *Arianism*? Was it nothing to the purpose, that *Simon Magus* and some of his disciples, that *Praxeas*, *Noëtus* and

Sabellius took occasion from the doctrine of the Church to advance such a notion of a *nominal Trinity*; and put the Catholicks to such difficulty for a reply, as shews they could not have that notion of a separate existence which the *Arians* espoused? Was it not material to take notice, how the very name of *Trinity* strikes at the heresies in both extremes; and how other terms came to be introduced in this controversy, as the different kind of opposition made by Hereticks furnished an occasion for them? Was it of no moment to the decision of this Controversy, that *Ignatius*, *Justin*, *Irenaeus*, *Clement*, (to say nothing of the rest) have given such lofty descriptions of the *Son* and *Holy Spirit*, as must support the *Catholick*, and can never be reconciled with the *Arian* hypothesis? Was it not a considerable argument on our side, that an *Heathen* Author, as old as *Lucian*, has mentioned the doctrine of the *Christian* Church about the *Trinity*, in such terms as inclined *Socinus* himself to admit, that the present *Catholick* notion of the *Trinity* was embraced by *some Christians* of that age? Was it nothing to the purpose to observe that this notion could not be first advanced by *Montanus*, because he was a good while suffer'd to remain in the communion of the Church, and was not at last rejected for any innovation in this particular; and *Tertullian* who fell into his delusions, yet declares that he had *always* entertain'd the same thoughts of the *Trinity*, and had not first received them from this pretended *Paraclete*? Was it not material to observe, how the doctrine of *Hippolytus*, in opposition to *Noetus*, agrees with that of *Tertullian*, in opposition to *Praxeas*: which shews it to have been the doctrine of *Greeks* as well as *Latins*, of *Catholicks* as well as *Montanists*, so that mutually they receive light and confirmation from each other? Was there nothing to the purpose in

B

the

the creed of *Gregory Thaumaturgus*? or would our Author have omitted to prove it spurious, if he could have destroyed the arguments by which I have supported it? Was there nothing worth considering in all that accusation which was brought against *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*, as tho' he had advanced the very sentiments espoused by *Arius* and his followers, nor in the credit which this accusation found at *Roma*, nor in the apology which *Dionysius* presented for himself, nor in the epistle which the other *Dionysius* wrote on that occasion?

After the rise of *Arius*, was it not again material to take notice with what doubling and prevarication his followers proposed and asserted their hypothesis, with what inconstancy they varied and transformed their principles, and how they never flourish'd or made any considerable figure, but under the patronage and shelter of the civil powers? Was it not material to take notice, how after the withdrawing of such favour and protection, they dwindled into little parties, and at length to none, whilst the catholick doctrine in this point was so earnestly received, that the fear of destroying it gave birth to other errors about the person of Christ, and the nature of this mysterious union of the Divinity with human flesh? Was it not worth our observation, how the catholick doctrine was all along supported under its greatest struggles and persecutions, particularly that most grievous one in *Africa*, when God was pleased to confirm it by fresh evidence of miracles, and Confessors speaking without tongues, were the undoubted witnesses of the truth of what they taught? Was it not, lastly, material to observe what struggles were made on the behalf of heresy at the time of the *Reformation*; and yet how in the end they were defeated, whilst they, whose aversion to *Papery* is most undeniable, have generally been convinced that

that the received doctrine in this matter, is so far from being any of the innovations or corruptions of *Papery*, that it is indeed an original and most important doctrine of the *Christian Religion*?

Whilst all these points of moment are omitted, I cannot but stand amazed at our Author's confidence, to entitle his Pamphlet either a *true narrative of the Controversy*, or a *Reply to my historical account*, and pretend that he has pick'd out of the history every thing that is any way to the purpose. Can that be esteem'd a *true narrative of the controversy*, which dwells entirely upon a circumstance or two, and leaves out the most material facts, upon which a just state of the *controversy* must depend? Or can that be a *reply to the historical account*, which takes no notice of such various particulars upon which the *historical account* has laid such just and reasonable stress? However, that the few passages in which I am concern'd as an Historian, may not be thought to stand unanswer'd, I shall take the pains briefly to re-consider them.

IV. The first is the use of the word *consubstantiality*, which this Author admits to be met with in some ancient Authors, but to have been taken from the *Platonick Philosophy*, and to have had a meaning very different from that in which the modern *orthodox* pretend to explain it. He should have shewn us what that meaning is, and wherein 'tis inconsistent with the *Catholick* exposition. Mean while he may remember, that we do not contend that whatever is affirmed by any *Platonick Writers* concerning the Beings which are term'd *consubstantial*, is therefore applicable to the Persons of the *Trinity*. We only insist, that by that term they intended an *equality* in all natural or essential perfections, such an *equality* as the *Arians*

deny to be between the *Father* and *Son*. I am content therefore to admit what is alledged by my Antagonist^b, that the *Pæmander* ascribed to *Hermes Trismegistus*, might be the work of some *Platonizing Christian*. Yet from his calling the *Word* of *God consubstantial*, and making that the ground of his being one with the *Creator*, I collect that he used the word *ὁμοούσιος* in the same acceptation we contend for at present, and consequently that the *catholick* doctrine was not unknown in the age when he wrote. I urge that *Writer's* authority no farther than this, and if he has another passage quoted by *Lactantius*, which represents the *Word* to be a *secondary Deity*, *visible and comprehensible, and made by the Creator of all*, I am not concern'd for the consistency of his opinion, especially since this *Author* has not stated any other meaning of the word *ὁμοούσιος*, in which he might be consistently understood.

V. The authority of the other *Writers* is more considerable. But here in the first place this *Author* charges me^c with falsification, in representing^d *Eusebius* to assure us, he had seen this word used by some learned and eminent *Bishops and Writers* among the *Ancients*, to express the *ONE Divinity of Father and Son*. This (he complains) is a *flagrant false report* concerning *Eusebius*, who says only, that in treating of the *Divinity of Father and Son*, they made use of the word *ὁμοούσιος consubstantial*. It must be own'd that neither he nor I have given the exact or literal translation of *Eusebius's* words: But I have put his words in the margin, from whence I think it appears that I have kept nearer to his meaning. To make use of a word in treating of a subject,

^b P. 29.^c P. 31.^d — *Ἐκ τῆς τῷ πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ θεολογίας τῇ τοῦ ὁμοούσιου συγχευαμένης ἐνίμαλιν.* Euseb. Epist. apud Socrat. H. E. l. i. c. 8, Histor. Account, p. 131, 132.

is a large way of speaking, and not very likely to determine the precise import of it. But *Eusebius* says they used the word *ὑποστασις*, about, or concerning the Divinity of Father and Son. And if so, it must be meant to express their consubstantial Divinity; and what is this but to say, the One Divinity of Father and Son? It is not material to enquire whether *Eusebius* was all along consistent with this acknowledgment. He was here giving account of his compliance in the Council of *Nice*, and defending it by the authority of ancient Writers.

The Authors meant by *Eusebius* might probably be many, whose writings are now lost. But since the same term appears in some whose writings are still preserv'd, our Author may enjoy his opinion, that these are the same writers who were design'd by *Eusebius*. But his endeavouring to shew from other passages that they were men of *Arian* sentiments, and consequently meant something else by the word *consubstantiality*, is meer trifling and chicanery, except he had first shewn what other sense that word would reasonably bear in their way of using it; and likewise made answer to those defences which have been made for them by Bishop *Bull*, Dr. *Waterland*, and others.

As to *Tertullian*, in the first place, our Author, very inconsistently, represents him to have had the same notions which were afterwards called *Arian*, and therefore to have meant quite another matter by the *consubstantiality* of the Son and Spirit; and yet a few pages afterwards^f, admits his agreement with the *Athanasian* doctrine of a consubstantial Trinity, and reproaches it as the result of his falling into *Montanism*. After this, I may fairly refer the Reader to that representation which I have made of his opinions in the *history*, and reckon it to be nothing weakened by this inconsistent opposition.

^a P. 32, 33.

^f P. 38, 50.

Origen is another voucher for the *consubstantiality*, and our Author tells us, he was so far from teaching the equality, &c. that he is expressly charged by the most zealous Athanasians, as giving baffle to the Arian notions. But what if Origen were inconsistent? Will this prove that he never used the word *consubstantial* in the *catholick* sense? which is the point in question. But there is so little said by this Author to clear up his notion, and so much has been offer'd by others to clear the exceptionable passages to a *catholick* sense, that it would be superfluous to enlarge upon it here.

The case of *Dionysius* of *Alexandria* is so fully stated in the *historical account*, where this Author's objections were consider'd beforehand, that I am under no apprehension of his testimony being weaken'd by any thing that can be offer'd to draw him on the side of *Arianism*.

The like may be said of *Theognostus*, against whom our Author¹ has produced the old objection of *Photius*, without taking notice of what has been urged over and over for the clearing of that matter.

VI. After this consideration of single authorities, our Author¹ comes down to the Council of *Antioch*, which he glories in as a full evidence on his side. Had the genuine acts of that council been preserved, this matter might have been set in stronger light. But by the accounts which are transmitted to us, I apprehend he has no reason to boast of any advantage to his cause. Our Author^k endeavours to reconcile the account of *Hilary* with that of *Ambrosius* and *Basil*, by supposing that *Paul* of *Samosata* might at first maintain the *consubstantiality* in a *Sabellian* sense, and after the

¹ P. 33.^k P. 35.¹ P. 39.^k P. 41.

Council had condemn'd it, as implying a *division* of the divine substance into distinct *prohyla*, *effluvia* or *emanations*, declaring withal that the Word was a distinct person, and yet really God, he might then endeavour to turn the *consubstantiality* upon their nation, as implying a division of the divine substance into three distinct essences. This reconciliation can hardly be admitted, because *Paul's* sophism concerning the *division of substance* is clearly represented as previous to the decision of the Council. So that it is much more likely that *Hilary* should be mistaken, and we may more safely depend on *Athanasius* and *Basil*, for the transactions of this eastern Council. However it be, their rejection, or rather dropping of a term which had been plainly abused, could be no disapprobation of the doctrine contained in it, when soundly explain'd.

Yes, but he goes on¹, *had they known that it was catholic doctrine, and only rejected it in the sense put upon it by Paul to deceive them; they would no doubt have explain'd in what sense they admitted it, as well as in what sense they rejected it.* And so no doubt they would, if they had had any occasion for that word to silence other heresies; but they thought best to deal with *Paul* by throwing out a word which he had sophistically abused, and for which they had no need in the controversies of that time, which were fully obviated by asserting the *personality* and *Divinity* of the Son. The case was otherwise in the dispute with *Arius*, where the Son's *personality* and *Divinity* were in terms acknowledg'd on both hands; but the crafty Heretick confined the *supreme* notion of *Godhead* to the person of the *Father*, whilst the Catholics were careful to maintain the *equality* of three Divine persons, which they thought could not be so

strongly express'd by any other word, as by the word *consubstantial*. But to say the Council of *Antioch* agreed to *Paul's* interpretation of the word, and knew of no good one it was capable of, is merely begging the question, and much more than the quotation from *Arbanasus* will justify. They did not critically enquire into the meaning of the word *ousios*, but spake of it as *ἐξαιήσας*, not according to their own natural conceptions of it (as this Author translates it) but as they receiv'd it, namely, from the mouth of the Heretick that stood before them.

I hope this may be enough to clear the Council of *Antioch*, and shew that their rejection of the *consubstantiality*, in the sense that was laid before them, is no argument of their disapproving it in the sense which is now maintain'd in the Church.

VII. The objection which was urg'd by those of *Sabellian* sentiments, against the *catholic* doctrine in the second and third centuries, namely, that it taught a *division of the Divine substance*, has been strongly urged by Bishop *Bull*, and Dr. *Waterland*, to shew that the *consubstantiality* was admitted in those ages. I had lightly touch'd upon the same observation^a. But this Author, it seems, has discover'd that there is not one word of truth in it^b, and that Bishop *Bull* did chiefly build it on a mistake of a passage in *Alexander's* letter, in which it is not supposed (according to the Bishop) that *Sabellians* and *Valentinians* made the objection of division against the *catholic* doctrine, but on the contrary, that the objection lay [from the Catholics] against the *Sabellian* and *Valentinian* notion. The learned Bishop was too sagacious not to perceive that *Alexander's* words, if

^a P. 42.

^b *Histor. Account*, p. 108, 125.

^c *True Narrative*, p. 47, 48.

taken by themselves, might admit of such interpretation, and therefore he expressly observes^m, that they are capable of two senses, either, (1.) That this *seem'd to Sabellius* to be the truth of the case. Or, (2.) That it *seem'd to him* to follow from the *catholick doctrine*. The first of these (which our Author contends for) the Bishop has rejected as absurd and incongruous, because *Sabellius* was a known assertor of the *unity of person*. After which it remains that the other interpretation is the only true one.

In order to guard against this answer, our author, tho' he seems to doubtⁿ *whether* the charge were laid *rightly or not* against *Sabellius*, yet endeavours to account how he might *give occasion* to such an *objection*, *tho' he supposed but one real Divine person*. To this purpose he first cites the letter^o of the *Alexandrian* clergy to their Bishop, *Σαβιλλιος τὴν μονάδα διακρίων ὑποτάρορα ἔπεν*, that *Sabellius dividing the unity, spake of a Son-Father*. Now here it is obvious to take notice that the *unity*, which they blame *Sabellius* for *dividing*, could not be unity of *substance*, since that charge could never be supported from so strict a unity of person, as is implied in the word *ὑποτάρορα*. But they must mean the *unity of Headship*, which the Church ascribed to the Father distinctly from the Son, and in respect of which the *Son* was *referr'd* to the *Father*, that so they might acknowledge (as *Alexander* himself had taught them) *ἓνα θεόν, μόνον ἀγέννητον, μόνον αἰδιόν*, *one God, the only Unbegotten, the only Eternal*, &c. Whereas *Sabellius*, by that uncatholick conjunction, ascribed such Headship as much to the *Son* as to the *Father* himself.

^m Bp. Bull, Def. fid. Nic. Sect. 2. c. 1. §. 12.

ⁿ P. 49.

^o Apud Athan. de syn. Arim. & Seleuc. tom. 1. p. 729. Ed. Bened. & apud Epiphan. Hær. 69. p. 732.

Our Author has added the authority of Epiphanius P reporting of Sabellius, that he represented the Father under the similitude of the Sun, and the Son as a ray emitted from it. But let any one inspect that place of Epiphanius, and he will see that by a ray emitted, they did not mean any real division, no, nor personal distinction, but only a different energy or method of manifestation. For as the sun, altho' but one in hypostasis, has yet a threefold energy; namely, of enlightening and warming, besides its own circular figure: So they taught that this warmth answers to the Holy Ghost, and illumination to the Son, whilst the Father himself is the Form of the whole hypostasis. Nay, that they meant nothing else but a temporary manifestation, suited to time and opportunity, will appear from what is subjoin'd immediately, that the Son was in time sent forth as a ray, to perform all things in the world which relate to the evangelical economy, and salvation of men, and then return'd to heaven again, as a ray sent out from the Sun, and returning back to its original.

Lastly he observes, that *a learned person tells us from Theodoret, that he [Sabellius] made the Son and Spirit [τοὺς ὡς ἀνθρώπους] Sections and Effluxes from the Father; which is the very thing which Alexander speaks of.* If our Author could have found any such thing in *Theodoret*, he need not have quoted him at second hand, any more than he did *Epiphanius* in the passage above quoted, which he took from the same learned person, without owning it. And since there is no such expres-

Η. Hæc. 62. p. 513. — Ως ἴσμεν ὅτι ἡ γλῶσση οὐκ ἐστὶν
 ἡ μὲν ὑποστάσις, τρεῖς δὲ ἔχουσι τὰς ἐνομοτίας. Φησὶ δὲ τὰ φωτιστικοί, καὶ
 τὸ θάλασσαν, καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ τῆς περιφροσύνης ἄνθρωπος. καὶ εἶναι μὲν τὸ θάλα-
 σσαν, εἶναι θέρμην καὶ ζῆλον, τὸ πνεῦμα, τὸ φωτιστικοί δὲ τὸν υἱόν, τὸν
 δὲ πατέρα αὐτὸν εἶναι τὸ εἶδος πάσης τῆς ὑποστάσεως. περιφροῦντα δὲ τὸν
 υἱὸν καθὼς πότε, ὡς περ ἀπὸ τοῦ, καὶ ἐργασάμενοι τὰ κατὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ
 τὰ τῆς ἀκατομίας ἐνομοταγίας, καὶ σωτηρίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἀνταποδοθῆναι
 δὲ αὐτοῖς εἰς ἔρπον, ὡς ὑπὸ γλῶσσης περιφροῦσιν. ἀπὸ τοῦ, καὶ πάλιν εἰς τὸν
 αἰὸν ἀναισθητοῦσιν. Epiphani. hæc. 62. p. 513.

tion in *Theod. Hæret. fab. l. 2. c. 9.* which is the place the learned person^r refers to, and where the heresy of *Sabellius* is professedly treated of, I must desire our Author to mend that quotation, before it will deserve to be considered.

So far then, *Bishop Bull's* interpretation will stand good, in regard of *Sabellius*. But it may be urged, that *Alexander* has coupled him with *Valentinus*, who certainly taught a *division of substance*, or substantial emanations from the Deity, and therefore cannot be supposed to have objected it against the Catholics. I answer, neither do we say that he made it an objection. The same seem'd both to him and to *Sabellius* to be the sense of the Church; but whilst this last made it an objection and a matter of cavil, the other only mention'd it with approbation, and hoped to find shelter in it for his own opinions.

Nor is this passage of *Alexander* the only proof of such an objection. We find it so clearly guarded against in *Justin Martyr*, and so expressly urged by *Praxeas* in *Tertullian*, that till our Author can find out some better colour for his evasion of those and other passages, there can be no need of adding any thing to what has been said by *Bishop Bull*, *Def. fid. Nic. Sett. 2. c. 1, 4.* and by *Dr. Waterland*, in his *Defence of Queries*, p. 383, 384. and *Second Defence*, p. 315.

VIII. The next point to which our Author proceeds, is the dispute between *Alexander* and *Arius*, and the method taken for deciding it. And here I am blamed^r for relating *the rise and manner of the controversy out of one Historian*, *Theodoret*, whose account is censured by this Author^s as the

^a A discourse shewing that the expositions of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, &c. By a Clergyman in the country (supposed to be *Dr. Whitby*) p. 70. ^r True Narrat. p. 53. ^s P. 59.

most imperfect of any, and guilty of palpable mistakes. But here under favour I must beg leave to say, that *Eusebius*, tho' certainly qualified to give the best account of any, is yet *the most imperfect* of all. I shall not pretend to give the reason of this, but it obliges us to have recourse to later Historians for the knowledge of those facts with which he was contemporary. In the next place, let any one look into my account, and see if I have not taken it from *Socrates* and *Sozomen*, nay, and *Philostorgius* himself, as well as *Theodoret*. But as *Theodoret* was a person of greater learning and judgment, so when he has supplied some circumstances which the others have omitted, I conceive it could be no fault to insert them in their proper order.

One thing our Author charges as a misrepresentation of *Theodoret*, where the mistake plainly lies in himself, and not in that Historian. *Theodoret* represents *Alexander* as professing the Son to be of one substance with the Father, and equal in dignity and honour. *Socrates*^u says only that he preached a unity in the Trinity, in such a manner as *Arius* thought to be *Sabellian*: Which (says our Author^x) is directly contrary to the notion of the Son's being consubstantial. It is so indeed, if the meaning of that word be rightly stated and explain'd, which guards against heresy in both extreams. But every one knows that the *Arians*, to throw the greater odium on it, were forward to tax the catholic notion of consubstantiality with *Sabellianism*.

^u — Τὸν πατρὸς τὸν υἱὸν ὁμοῦσιον λέγοντος. Theod. hæ. fab. l. 4. c. 1. Ὁμοτίμον ἔλεγε τὸν πατρὸς τὸν υἱόν, καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν οὐσίαν ἔχει τῷ γεγεννηκότι θεῷ. Hist. Eccl. l. 1. c. 2. ^x Ἐν τριᾷδι μοῦνδα ἴσως φιλοσοφῶν — Ἀρίστος δ' — οἰόμενος τὸ τοῦ σαβελλίου — δόγμα ἰσχυρίζεσθαι. Socrat. H. E. l. 1. c. 5. This is the passage intended by me (p. 166.) where I say that *Alexander asserted the inseparable unity of substance*: tho' the reference is made by mistake to c. 6. where our Author complains (p. 55.) he can find no such thing. ^x P. 59.

So that there is no inconsistency in these accounts. And as to what our Author ^a adds from *Sozomen*, but in his own words, *that when Arius broach'd his notions, Alexander did not think him at all in the wrong; and that upon two publick debates about the matters, he was doubtful and undetermined, whether to side with Arius, or his opponents*: This is an artful advantage made of that Historian's account of the Bishop's equal and impartial behaviour between the disputants, till the matter was ripe for judgment, it being certain both from *Alexander* himself^z, and also from *Epiphanius*^a, that *Arius* carried himself with such secrecy at first that it was no easy matter for *Alexander* to perceive his real drift, and consequently to pronounce sentence. So little reason had our Author to complain^b of my pretence that *Arius* first vented his notions in private being a meer fiction without any ground.

I need not perhaps have said so much concerning the state of the question between *Alexander* and *Arius*, because this Author's misrepresentation of that matter has been chastised already by a more able hand^c. After all it seems surprizing, that he should acknowledge their dispute to have been concerning the nature and existence of the Son^d, and yet deny these points to be any principal doctrine of Christianity, or of any moment in the present dispute between us, which he says^e is about other matters of the greatest importance, and in which the unity, supremacy, and worship of God is nearly and immedi-

^a P. 59.

^y Sozom. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 15.

^z ——— Ἀλλ' ἑαυτοῖς σπῆλαια λησῶν ἐικοδομήσαντες, ἀδελφεαὶς ἐν αὐτοῖς ποιεῖται συνόδος νύκτως τὸ καὶ μὲθ' ἡμῶν ἐν ταῖς κατὰ χριστὸν καὶ ἡμῶν διαβολαῖς ἀσκήρητοι ——— ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ τῷ βίῳ αὐτῶν καὶ τῇ ἀποστολῇ ἐπιχειρήσει πρέπει, διὰ τὸ λαμβάνειν, βραδείας ἐπιτίσαντες, καμψυφῶν τῆς προσκυνήσεως χριστοῦ τὴν θεότητα ἐκκλησίας ἐξήλασσαν. Alex. Alexandr. Epist. ad Alex. Constant. apud Theod. H. E. l. i. c. 4.

^a Ἐγένετο ὅ ταῦτα ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀγνοῦντες τὸ μακαρίν Αλεξάνδρου. Epiph. hæ. 69. p. 729.

^b True Narrat. P. 53. ^c Dr. Bishop's Sermons, p. 241. ^d P. 75. ^e P. 76.

most imperfect of any, and guilty of palpable mistakes. But here under favour I must beg leave to say, that *Eusebius*, tho' certainly qualified to give the best account of any, is yet *the most imperfect of all*. I shall not pretend to give the reason of this, but it obliges us to have recourse to later Historians for the knowledge of those facts with which he was contemporary. In the next place, let any one look into my account, and see if I have not taken it from *Socrates* and *Sozomen*, nay, and *Philostorgius* himself, as well as *Theodoret*. But as *Theodoret* was a person of greater learning and judgment, so when he has supplied some circumstances which the others have omitted, I conceive it could be no fault to insert them in their proper order.

One thing our Author charges as a misrepresentation of *Theodoret*, where the mistake plainly lies in himself, and not in that Historian. *Theodoret*^{*} represents *Alexander* as professing the Son to be *of one substance with the Father*, and *equal in dignity and honour*. *Socrates*^u says only that he preached a *unity in the Trinity*, in such a manner as *Arius* thought to be *Sabellian*: Which (says our Author^x) is *directly contrary to the notion of the Son's being consubstantial*. It is so indeed, if the meaning of that word be rightly stated and explain'd, which guards against heresy in both extreams. But every one knows that the *Arians*, to throw the greater odium on it, were forward to tax the *catholic* notion of *consubstantiality* with *Sabellianism*.

^{*} — Τὸν πατέρα τὸν υἱὸν ὁμοῦσιον λέγοντος. Theod. hæ. fab. l. 4. c. 1. Ὁμοτίμον ἔλεγε τοῦ πατρὸς τὸν υἱόν, καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν οὐσίαν ἔχειν τῷ γεννητότι διῶ. Hist. Eccl. l. 1. c. 2. ^u Ἐν τριᾷ ὁμοῦσιον ἰσχυροῦσι φιλοσοφῶν — Ἀριος δ' — ὁμοῦσιον τὸ τοῦ σαβελλίου — δόγμα ἰσχυροῦσι. Socrat. H. E. l. 1. c. 5. This is the passage intended by me (p. 166.) where I say that *Alexander asserted the inseparable unity of substance*: tho' the reference is made by mistake to c. 6. where our Author complains (p. 55.) he can find no such thing.

So that there is no inconsistency in these accounts. And as to what our Author ^a adds from *Sozomen* ^b, but in his own words, *that when Arius breach'd his notions, Alexander did not think him at all in the wrong; and that upon two publick debates about the matters, he was doubtful and undetermined, whether to side with Arius, or his opponents*: This is an artful advantage made of that Historian's account of the Bishop's equal and impartial behaviour between the disputants, till the matter was ripe for judgment, it being certain both from *Alexander* himself ^c, and also from *Epiphanius* ^d, that *Arius* carried himself with such secrecy at first that it was no easy matter for *Alexander* to perceive his real drift, and consequently to pronounce sentence. So little reason had our Author to complain ^e of my pretence that *Arius* first vented his notions in private being a meer fiction without any ground.

I need not perhaps have said so much concerning the state of the question between *Alexander* and *Arius*, because this Author's misrepresentation of that matter has been chastised already by a more able hand ^e. After all it seems surprizing, that he should acknowledge their dispute to have been concerning the nature and existence of the Son ^d, and yet deny these points to be any principal doctrine of Christianity, or of any moment in the present dispute between us, which he says ^e is about other matters of the greatest importance, and in which the unity, supremacy, and worship of God is nearly and immedi-

^a P. 59.

^b Sozom. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 15.

^c ——— Αλλ' ἑαυτοῖς σπῆλαια ληστῶν ἐκκοδμήσαντες, ἀδιαλείπτως ἐν αὐτοῖς ποιῶνται συνόδους νύκτας τὸ καὶ μεθ' ἡμῶν ἐν ταῖς κατὰ χριστὸν καὶ ἡμῶν διαβολαῖς ἀσκήρητοι ——— ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ τῷ βίῳ αὐτῶν καὶ τῇ ἀνοσίῳ ἐπιχειρήσει πρίπι, διὰ τὸ λαμβάνειν, βραδίως ἐπιτίθεντες, καμψυφαὶ τῆς προσκυμένης χριστῷ τῇ θιότητι ἐκκλησίας ἐξ-ηλάσασθαι. Alex. Alexandr. Epist. ad Alex. Constant. apud Theod. H. E. l. i. c. 4.

^d Εγένετο ὅ ταῦτα ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀγνοῦντες τὸ μακαρίον Αλεξάνδρου. Epiph. hæ. 69. p. 729. ^e True Narrat. P. 53. ^f Dr. Bishop's Sermons, p. 241. ^g P. 75. ^h P. 76.

ably concern'd. He must be an acute distinguisher indeed, who can separate these questions from the nature and existence of the Son.

IX. But there are two facts relating to this matter, which it may more particularly concern me to clear up. One is the letter written by *Constantine* on this occasion; the other is the conduct of *Hosius*, who was the Messenger dispatched with it. If I have any where omitted a matter of history which was proper to be inserted, it is in the account of *Constantine*, of whom I have only said^f, that *Constantine being then at Nicomedia, was much concern'd at the account of those unhappy differences, and writing both to Alexander and Arius upon the subject, he sent Hosius, the celebrated Bishop of Corduba in Spain, to make a more exact enquiry into the merits of the cause.* I have not added (as I might) that he blamed *Alexander* as well as *Arius*, and advised them to leave off contesting such abstruse points, as being a useless verbal dispute, and not affecting any main doctrine of religion. And if our Author^g will needs have this to be a culpable omission, I am content to stand corrected for it. But then, to prevent any misconstruction, it must be added that *Constantine* was at this time a very young *Christian*, and may well be supposed not sufficiently acquainted with the nature and consequence of such a dispute; that he was then at *Nicomedia*, where *Eusebius* the Bishop was a known favourer of *Arius*, and by his interest with the Empress *Constantia*, may be easily presumed to have possess'd the Emperor with a partial representation of the matter, and thereby have influenced him to write in such a strain of *neutrality*, which was the next thing to gaining him absolutely over; but that after the return of *Hosius*, when

^f Histor. Account, p. 170. ^g True Nar. p. 73.

the Emperor was more fully let into the state of the case, his opinion of that dispute was different, and he continued from thenceforth firmly attached to the orthodox side.

X. As to the other fact of the conduct of Hosius, I say ^h the result of his message seems to have been (tho' we have not any clear account of the matter) that Hosius in council approv'd the conduct of the Patriarch, and ratified the sentence he had denounced against the Heretick; at least that at his return he satisfy'd the Emperor of the reasonableness of it.

This is not a point of any great moment, nor is it express'd by me with any high degree of assurance, but with the doubtfulness of a conjecture, gather'd from some dark hints and intimations in history. But it will be necessary for me to shew the grounds of it more fully, because this Author (without considering the reference I had made in the margin) is pleas'd to declaim on this occasion with more impetuosity than reason. *This (says he) is the Doctor's representation, imperfect and ungrounded, and more of romance than history. For Hosius was not sent to make enquiry into the merits of the cause, (which Constantine was well inform'd in) nor to be at all a judge in the matter; but as Eusebius expressly tells us, to reconcile the difference, and make peace between them. And as there is not the least evidence, either in Eusebius, Philostorgius, Socrates or Sozomen, in their account of the matter, of Hosius's ratifying the sentence which Alexander had denounced against Arius; so had he pretended to any such thing, he had acted not only without authority, but against the express design of the Emperor's letters which he carried.*

What grounds there are for supposing that Constantine was well inform'd, we have seen al-

ready. The letters of the Emperor to the contending parties are no clear evidence how far the secret instructions of *Hosius* might extend. And therefore we are at liberty to guess at them from the following proceedings. Now that *Hosius* did make enquiry into the merits of the cause, and in Council ratify the sentence which *Alexander* had denounced, tho' we have no full and certain evidence, yet, I thought, was reasonably collected by *Tillemont*, from that account which the *Arian* Historian *Philostorgius* himself has given of this matter. And therefore in the margin I referr'd to *Philost. l. 1. c. 7.* with a *confer Tillemont, tom. 6. in S. Alexandre d' Alexandrie, §. 10.* Now the account of *Philostorgius* is this, *That before the Council of Nice, Alexander of Alexandria being at Nicomedia, and conferring with Hosius of Corduba, and other Bishops that were with him, prevail'd with them to declare synodically for the Son's consubstantiality with the Father, and to reject Arius from communion.* Now as we have no other account of *Alexander's* going to *Nicomedia* before the Council of *Nice*, so neither is it at all likely that he and *Hosius* should have carried their points so easily in that city where *Eusebius* presided: And therefore I thought it was but reasonable to acquiesce in *Tillemont's* representation, that this was more probably done at *Alexandria*, where we know they had an interview, when *Hosius* was dispatch'd thither with *Constantine's* letters upon this business. I thought a marginal reference might suffice, without stating the grounds of this conjecture at large. But the abusive language and invective of this Author, have forced me to look back into a fact which

Ὅτι καὶ πρὸ τῆς ἐν Νικαίᾳ συνόδου αὐτοὶ τὸν Ἀλεξανδρινὸν Φρόν
ἀλεξάνδρῳ καταλαβόντα τὴν νικομήδειαν, καὶ οὕτω τὸ τῷ κενδεύῳ
ἐπιτυχόντα καὶ τὰς ἐν αὐτῇ ἐπισκόποις συνεδιῶναι ψήφοις ἀπομολογῆσαι
ἐπαρκεῖν αὐτῷ τῷ πατρὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλοις ἀποκηρύττει.

is really in it self of little moment, and upon which I had not built any important conclusions.

XI. After this our Author proceeds to the Council of Nice, which in a very sophistical and partial manner he would represent to be on his side. So that the Council, which has always been esteem'd the great bulwark against *Arianism*, is now made, tho' unwillingly, to join hands with it. But let us see his proofs. Why, in the first place, the Bishops had private conferences beforehand, in which ^k, after a full examination of Arius's opinions, they were inclined not to give their suffrage one way or other, either for or against him, but to have left them undecided, as being mere speculative notions, and to have agreed to declare their faith in the catholick receiv'd forms of the Church, without any alteration. He should have said with *Sozomen*^l, to whom he refers, that having *Arius* before them, they made an accurate enquiry into his positions, and took care not basily to give their vote on either side. Which shews that they proceeded with caution and deliberation, in order to know the real drift of both parties, but not that they inclined to leave the matter undecided.

He next observes ^m, that the Bishops of this Council were disposed to have declined the use of *unscriptural* terms, and to have express'd the faith only in the words of *Scripture*. I had observ'd the same thing ⁿ, that those terms were only introduced to guard against the evasive explanation of the Hereticks.

He would, lastly ^o, have it thought, that the terms made use of by the *Nicene* Council were meant in a quite different sense from that which the Ca-

^k P. 77. 78.

^l Τὸν ἄριον εἰς μέτρον παρήγαγον, καὶ ἐκρίβη βασιλεὺς ἐποιοῦντο τῶν αὐτοῦ προτάσεων ἀκριβῶς ἢ ἐπὶ δ' αὐτὰ τὴν ψῆφον ἄγειν ἐφυλάττετο. *Sozom.* l. i. c. 19.

^m P. 79.

ⁿ *Hist. Acc.* p. 174.

^o *True Narrat.* p. 89, &c.

abolish of following ages put upon them; and tho' they struck at some peculiar tenets and positions of *Arius*, yet were far from intending that *natural equality*, or *unity of essence*, which is the doctrine of modern *Arianism*. But as the meaning of that Council has been often clear'd up by abler hands, and also briefly stated in the *Historical Account*, I shall hold my self excus'd from repeating what has been said already, till something more specious shall be offer'd to invalidate it. Mean while our Author himself seems not to be insensible of the weight and authority of the *Nicene Council* lying against his hypothesis, when he expresses a such zeal for abolishing the terms approved by it, and recommends this to the consideration of the *Governors of the Church*, as a matter of great importance.

XII. Our Author's work, after this, is chiefly employ'd in stating the doctrine of some *Arian* or *Semi-Arian* Councils, for which he has express'd a great esteem, and I but little. But as neither his opinion nor mine will pass for evidence, so I am persuaded that the methods which were us'd, for the convention and management of Councils, in the reign of *Constantine*, will gain no great support or credit to his cause. However, I am content that his relation and mine should be submitted to the judgment of those who are conversant in these matters. And in conclusion of all, I cannot but express some satisfaction that a person who wanted no inclination to spy out any faults in my history, and set them in the worst light, should sin, after all, upon so few particulars, and be so little able to make good his allegations in them; and when he pretends to give us a new *narrative* in opposition to it, should do it in a manner so plainly defective and fallacious.

PART II.

I. **T**HE *Historical Account* had been publish'd above five years and an half, when an enquiry came out, under the form of *A Letter to a Friend*, into one particular fact related in it, viz. into the miracle said to have been wrought in the fifth century upon some orthodox Christians, in confirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity, who continued to speak clearly and distinctly, after their tongues had been cut out by order of Hunneric, an Arian, King of the Vandals. As this Author has written in a more genteel and scholar-like manner than the *Author of the Reply*, so he is entitled to another kind of answer. And I do not only allow, but invite him to make the same search into the grounds of any other fact reported in that *history*, being assured that what is true will receive confirmation by that means, and not desirous to abide by any thing which will not stand the test of such enquiry.

But whilst I am content with his enquiring and objecting to my evidence, he must allow me, in return, to examine the weight of his exceptions, and not expect me immediately to give up a fact, because it may not seem to him sufficiently supported. Now the exceptions which are made to that particular Fact, either by the Writer of this letter, or by his correspondent, who wrote the preface to it, do respect either the occasion on which this miracle was wrought, or the nature of the miracle itself, or the evidence by which it is attested,

II. As to the occasion on which this miracle was wrought, the Writer of the preface is of opinion, that when a *divine revelation* is once settled and establish'd, there is no reason to expect new miracles for the confirmation of any part of it, and that they

would in such a case be ineffectual. Which he confirms from *Abraham's* answer to the rich man in the parable — *If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, tho' one rose from the dead.* But as that passage relates not to any controversy that might happen about the meaning of a rule, but to an open disobedience to a rule that is known and understood; so indeed the efficacy of such proceedings, and the propriety of using them, is a secret of Providence which we can never penetrate, and there may be wise ends in the Divine counsels for such a dispensation, altho' we should have no apparent reason to expect it.

He observes, as to this instance in *Africa*, that both parties profess'd themselves Christians, and that the dispute between them did not relate to the truth of the Christian revelation in general, but only to the sense of a particular doctrine. Which is so far from proving that they had no occasion for miracles, that to my apprehension it rather argues that they had. For had the dispute been about the truth of Christianity in general, it might perhaps have sufficed to alledge the miracles wrought by the Apostles: but when both sides pretended to adhere to the doctrine taught by the Apostles, and disputed about the real meaning or design of it, here seems to be room for a new interposition, especially among a people rude and illiterate, who might easily pass judgment on the evidence of sense, but not on any critical debates about the use of words.

He adds, that *Christians are no where taught to expect miracles for the confirmation of their faith under sufferings.* But the like answer will suffice. God best knows the greatness of their trials, and the sufficiency of their supports, and therefore can judge when and what additions should be made to them, tho' we are not able to lay down any rule for our expecting them. In fact we know that

God has sometimes wrought miracles, and given new revelations, for the support of his servants under great trials; and the Christian Church was never exposed to greater trial or difficulty, than in the time of this *Kandal* persecution we are now considering.

Lastly he suggests, that *these suppositions may possibly be thought by some to look too much like impeaching the Christian religion, as not sufficient to answer some of the main ends for which it was design'd, and which it declares to have in view: that is, to give us a clear and perfect rule of every thing that is necessary for us to believe and practise, and to furnish us with all proper motives to constancy in the profession of it.* I cannot help what some may think; but sure it is enough to vindicate the goodness of Providence, to have given a revelation full and perfect in itself, and also sufficiently explained and enforced for all ordinary cases, provided in such as are singular and extraordinary, such farther explication and enforcement be not withheld as is properly adapted to them.

The Author of the letter speaks more darkly upon this subject, than his friend the Author of the preface. For tho' he *inclines to think* ⁹, that a power of working miracles lasted after the Apostles days, and cannot say how long, yet he seems not to give much credit to the report of any, but those that were wrought while Paganism was the establish'd religion thro' the Roman empire. Miracles said to be done after this, and among Christians, should in my apprehension (says he) be very cautiously used, as an argument for the truth of the Christian religion, and more especially for the proof of any particular doctrine. The reason he gives is, because there are many idle and absurd stories in the Fathers

and ecclesiastical Historians, from whence the Church of Rome defends the greatest superstition and idolatry. As cautious as you please, so you be not sceptical. Let the truth of the fact be tried by the credit of the evidence supporting it: and if we have but proper vouchers for its being done, I conceive it can be little material for us to dispute whether there was any occasion for the doing it.

III. As to the nature of the miracle, in the next place, its being singular in its kind, is urged as a consideration to render it suspected. *When the Apostles work'd miracles on human bodies, which wanted any faculty, their way was to restore the organ to its proper exercise. When a dumb person was cured by our Saviour, he loosed the string of his tongue, but did not give him the faculty of speech without a tongue. We do not read, that he gave men sight who had no eyes, or made them capable of seeing in any other than the natural manner: or that a man with a wither'd hand was made to use it, till it was restored whole as the other.* But in the miracle we are speaking of, there was a faculty restored without the organ. A miracle indeed of miracles! I am glad to find the fact, if proved, was confessedly miraculous. Admit it then to be singular in its kind; that can be no just bar to the credit of it, but the appeal must be to the only proper evidence in cases of fact, viz. the evidence of history, the authority of the witnesses attesting it. The history of *Balaam's Ass speaking with human voice to forbid the madness of a Prophet*, is as singular in its kind, as this can be pretended to be. And yet I apprehend it is never the less credible because of its singularity.

Both these Gentlemen, the Author of the letter, and of the preface, seem greatly afraid lest we

should give advantage to the enemies of Christianity, by insisting upon such arguments as will not bear a strict examination. But let us be as cautious on the other hand, lest from an over-timorousness not to insist upon facts which are not properly supported, we be rashly induced to give up such as are. Profane men will never want matter for jest and ridicule, and I doubt not but the story of *Basilian's* Acts might be made to yield them as much diversion as the Confessors of *Ty-pasa*. But I know no rule of complaisance, which should oblige us to give up the one or the other, so long as the testimonies that support them are sufficient and credible.

IV. The first evidence examin'd by this Author is that of *Victor Vicensis*, who was himself a Bishop in *Africk*, a Confessor in the same persecution under *Flammeric*, and wrote his history about three years after this fact. He was then without doubt a contemporary Historian; he had sufficient opportunity to satisfy himself of the reality of the fact; and he speaks of it with great confidence, and refers his readers to *Constantinople* for ocular conviction. This, if false, had been so easily contradicted, that it must have been the height of madness to put it upon that issue without certain grounds; nor is it likely that the *Arians* should have left the *Catholics* to glory in it uncontrou'd, if they had really been able to except against the evidence.

After this it will seem to have but little weight which is suggested by this Author, that one may very reasonably conclude, that *Victor* never saw these Christians, nor heard them speak; for if he had, he most certainly would have told us so, and not sent his Readers to *Constantinople* to know the truth:

may he does not so much as say, that he heard the story from any, who saw the thing done, or the persons themselves. Be it so; for I would not contend for more than his words necessarily import: yet is an Historian sure of nothing but what he either sees with his own eyes, or receives from such as did? He might easily enquire into the grounds of the story, and he speaks as one that was well satisfied with them: nor does he send his Readers to *Constantinople* because he look'd upon the thing to be at all doubtful, but because some persons might be so incredulous as to ask for ocular conviction.

V. The testimony of *Aeneas* of *Gaza* is more minute and particular, not only that he saw the men, but that, distrustful his ears, he examined with his eyes, and opening the mouth saw that the whole tongue was torn from the roots. But to this it is excepted, — that *Aeneas* does not assert this in his own person, but only in a dialogue between *Axithus* and *Theophrastus*, he makes the first of them express himself in that manner, — that we are not so much as sure of the age in which *Aeneas* lived, — and whether it were in the same or a following age, it can only be collected that he believed the story himself, and has therefore brought a person into his dialogue affirming he had seen and heard them. In answer to this it may be said, that *Aeneas*'s account is so nice and circumstantial, that learned men seem not to have been without reason, in judging him to have reported it from his own inspection.

But I must confess I was aware of this objection, and therefore had so far caution'd my quotation, as to observe that he relates it in his dialogue under the person of *Axithus*. But at what time soever *Aeneas* be supposed to have lived, thus much is

clear, that the story subsisted in credit to his time; and I am content to lay no greater stress upon it, tho' it is to my apprehension much more probable that he either relates it of himself, or at least that he was satisfied some other person had examined the fact in the manner he describes.

VI. The next testimony consider'd by this Author, is that of *Justinian*, which some perhaps (says he*) may think very considerable, because what he says of the story is in one of his laws, which may be consider'd as a publick record. I shall now add, that it is the more considerable, because *Justinian*, tho' he had seen the men formerly, yet wrote not this account till many years afterwards; which shews that the story still subsisted in credit, after it had stood the test of such as pleased to examine it.

What then has our Author alledged in bar to this authority? Why he says, *this passage of itself is so far from proving the thing, that had not such a story been heard of before, one should scarce interpret poenas suas loquebantur, in this sense, they related, or, gave an account of their suffering. For my part, I think one should scarce interpret them otherwise. And this Author seems to be nearly of the same opinion, when he adds immediately*², —*They can NECESSARILY be said to signify no more, than that in a lamentable manner they SHEWED what punishment they had undergone, which MIGHT be done without any articulate sounds or speaking. But will any one say, that one should scarce interpret a word in any sense, beyond what necessarily*

* P. 29.

† The words of *Justinian* are these: *Vidimus venerabiles viros, qui, abscissis radicitus linguis, suas poenas miserabiliter loquebantur.* Justinian. Cod. l. 1. tit. 27. Archel. Præfect. Prætor. Afric.

² P. 30.

must be, or that that certainly was the case, which only possibly *might* be. It is at least more natural and agreeable to the use of speech, to understand *Justinian* in the sense before-mention'd.

I admit what this Author adds^a, *that loquor is frequently used in a metaphorical sense*: but then, I insist that *metaphors* are not to be urged arbitrarily and without reason, especially in laws and records, where the plainest and most simple stile should be expected. And I cannot but admire that our Author, who calls this here a *metaphorical sense*, should so far forget himself in his 52^d page, as to call it *the most obvious sense*. Besides, when the whole is taken together — *abscissis radicibus linguis loquebantur* — a man must be very much resolved not to believe the story, who can explain it to any other than the literal meaning. Or whatever might be said of this passage, if taken by itself, yet when it is taken in conjunction with other accounts of the same and of the following age, it cannot but be supposed to refer to the same fact, and make the same representation of this miraculous deliverance.

Nor is our Author, after all, very much in love with this *metaphorical* interpretation, but does in effect give it up by a parenthesis at the bottom of the page, at the very same time that he is urging another reason to enforce it. *If (says he^b) he meant any thing more in that place (WHICH YET I SHALL NOT DENY) 'tis much he should not enlarge upon it — at least, that he should not represent it as a very wonderful miracle.* It is hard, at twelve hundred years distance, to be required to give a reason, why a man, who said enough to our purpose, did not say more. And yet if we must needs have some express mention of a *miracle*, we may find it much more probably than that *metaphorical* interpretation, if by cutting off one small syllable,

^a P. 30.

^b P. 30, 31.

instead of *miserabiliter loquebantur*, we would read only *mirabiliter loquebantur*.

Lastly, our Author adds ^c, that tho' *loquebantur* should be taken literally, yet still *Justinian's* words do not necessarily imply, that he ever heard those men speak, or examin'd into the truth of the story, but only that he saw such persons WHO SPAKE, that is, WHO WERE USED TO SPEAK, and give an account of their suffering. Such straining of language discovers a prodigious bias to one side of the question, and can need no answer with those who are capable of attending to any.

VII. *Marcellinus Comes*, who was *Justinian's* Chancellor, is another of the witnesses: And our Author deals with him as he has done with his Master, observing ^d that the words *CONSPEXI LOQUENTES*, don't necessarily imply that he saw and heard them when they spake. They may intimate no more than that he saw some of these SPEAKING PERSONS, or who were reported to speak. If he had design'd the former sense, he might have put it out of all doubt, by saying *AUDIVI LOQUENTES*. For my part, I am so weak as to stand by the grammatical construction, and think that the words *CONSPEXI LOQUENTES* do necessarily imply that he saw them speaking. And it was in this case more proper to say *conspexi*, than *audivi loquentes*, because the proof of the miracle depended on the evidence of sight.

There is one objection more, made in common against this Writer and *Justinian*^e, that they must needs have been very young, when they saw these Confessors, and consequently easy to be imposed upon in case any such thing was design'd. But if this observation should be thought to take off from their

^c P. 32.

^d P. 35.

^e P. 33, 35.

exactness in examining, yet the distance of time at which they reported it, will shew that it had not all that while been sufficiently gain-said or refuted, since persons of that figure and consequence did openly avow and maintain it.

VIII. *Procopius of Caesarea*, by his situation at *Constantinople*, a Senator of that royal city, had, by our Author's own confession^f, *an opportunity to enquire thoroughly into the fact*. But the exception made to his testimony is this^g, that he *does not say one word of his having seen or heard these men himself, or that they were in being when he wrote his history*. The relation will be never the less true, if we suppose it to have been written after the men were dead; and whether *Procopius* saw the men or not, yet living as he did at *Constantinople*, and being afterwards raised to a station which gave him the best means of enquiry, it must be very extraordinary to imagine he could be deceiv'd in a fact of this importance. And yet after all, the phrase seems to me to imply something more than their being *alive to his time*, (as our Author translates it) *i. e.* not dead and buried before *Procopius* was born; namely, their *being together with him at Constantinople*, so as to appear before him at least, and exercise their faculty of speech, *οἱ ἐνὶ πρὸς ἐμὲ περιόντες ἐν Βυζαντίῳ ἔχοντο ἀπαρκεῖν τῇ φωνῇ*. And I suppose it is upon this ground that *Evagrius* has cited *Procopius* as an eye-witness of the fact, which our Author^h censures as a falsity.

IX. *Victor Tununensis*, tho' he lived also in the reign of *Justinian*, yet does not affirm the matter of his own knowledge, but appeals to the testimony of the *royal city*, where their bodies were interr'd. This our Authorⁱ calls *contenting himself with a*

^f P. 39.^g P. 38.^h P. 43.ⁱ P. 44.

story, that such persons lay buried there, instead of inquiring into the fact from those who were contemporary. To which we need only reply, that instead of referring his Readers to contemporary witnesses, who were probably dead by the time of his writing, and could no more be enquired of, he chose rather to refer them to sepulchral monuments, and the sanction of a publick testimony.

X. The remaining Authors who have made mention of this miracle are *Evagrius*, and *Gregory the Great*, and *Isidore* Archbishop of *Sevil*; and tho' they do not pretend to be eye-witnesses of it themselves, as living in the latter part of the sixth century, yet their testimony is considerable for all that, which shews that the story still maintain'd its credit, and had not been overthrown by any counter evidence.

In short, the strength of the whole evidence lies in this — that a Bishop of that age and nation wrote an account of the fact, within three years after it was transacted, and spake of it as a matter of which any one might be convinced by ocular demonstration, at *Constantinople* — that his report is so far from being contradicted or refuted by any counter evidence, that it is indeed abundantly confirm'd by the testimony of divers credible witnesses, who saw these Confessors themselves, and without finding any reason to suspect an imposture, continued in the firm belief of it to the latter part of their lives, when they wrote those accounts of it which are transmitted to us — that still no one was able to gainsay this miracle, but it continued in full credit thro' the next age, when *Evagrius*, *Gregory*, and *Isidore*, persons of high station, and flourishing in different countries, gave the same relation, as of a matter that was amply and sufficiently attested. And if *Aeneas* of *Gaza* should be referr'd
to

to any latter age, that will only shew the strength of the tradition, which preserv'd its credit throughout every age; nor was there ever any attempt (that I can find) to overthrow the testimonies that support it, before this Pamphlet appear'd which I am now considering.

Upon the whole, I think I may conclude, that there are few matters of history, which are so well supported by the testimony of the Writers themselves, and therefore he who shall discredit this, will very much *shake the faith of history*, and may easily find pretences for eluding any fact which depends on the report of ancient Writers.

XI. But there is one objection, which our Author insists much upon, and which I have reserv'd to this place to be consider'd last of all, because it affects all the witnesses we have alledg'd, except *Justinian*. It is this, that the Writers, whose testimony we build upon in this matter, were credulous men, easy to be impos'd upon by false accounts of miracles, as appears from other instances of their relating many things which are improbable, and some that are ridiculous. But when our Author would compare these instances with this of the Confessors in *Mauritania*, he seems to forget that there is neither any similitude in the nature of the facts, nor in the manner of the testimony given to them. The fact was here of so publick and so permanent a nature, so easy to be canvass'd over and over by multitudes of people, that if we could suppose some weak persons capable of being deceiv'd, yet it is not to be imagin'd that the imposture should remain undiscover'd, so as to be transmitted to future ages for an undisputed miracle. The credit of it depends not on the testimony of a single person, but the concurrent evidence of many witnesses, relating it not from any loose or uncon-

sider'd

sider'd reports, but as a matter that was really approved and manifested to their own senses: and all this without any attempt made on the other side, to disparage or abate the credit of so surprising an event. We may therefore well insist upon this fact as sufficiently attested, and yet not require the same belief of every obscure relation which we may possibly meet with in one or other of the same Writers, without any fix'd circumstances of time or place, without such permanency of effect, such publick opportunity of making enquiry, or such general consent of contemporary and succeeding Authors.

XII. These considerations are of such weight towards establishing the truth of this piece of history, that our Author himself has not resolution enough to leave the subject, without allowing it to have some real foundation. He admits^k, *it is not probable that the whole thing should be an entire fiction, and such a piece of history have its rise from nothing, but the bare imagination of zealous Historians.* He admits therefore that Hunneric did order the tongues of these Confessors to be cut out, but conjectures withal^l, that *some of them might possibly lose only a part of their tongue, after which they might be able to speak without a miracle.* But if this possible conjecture is enough to bear down the express and positive assertion of eye-witnesses, deliver'd by the Writers of that age in the clearest terms, and transmitted to following ages without any contradiction, I must still stick to my opinion, that the credibility of history is lost, and there is no ancient fact so well attested, but men of wit and fancy may invent some method or other to elude it. Our Author cannot but allow

^k P. 54.

^l P. 55.

the story to be true in part: and if he does not allow it to be all true, he should give some better reason than merely his own disinclination to it. The evidence produced is clear for the whole; and if a part of the relation is credible on that evidence, I am apt to think the rest will have the fortune to stand with it.

Our Author expects that so surprising a miracle should have had a greater efficacy in the conversion of those that opposed the doctrine of the Trinity. That it had some such efficacy we are at liberty to suppose, tho' we cannot ascertain how much. But let any one account for the obstinacy of Jews and Heathens, in withstanding the miracles of Christ and his Apostles, and he may then with some colour challenge us to account for this perverseness of *Arian* infidelity. Mean while we cannot be persuaded that any consequential arguments, and especially from negative consequences, should be enough to overthrow such direct and positive proof as that already produced. And our Author, who is so unwilling to admit this matter of fact upon such substantial evidence, cannot be insensible that he is forced to admit a thousand other matters without half so much.

P. 53. 54.

E. N. I. S.

